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SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, From October 28 through November 2, 1969, Captain
3 William L. Albracht distinguished himself while serving as
4 commander of Firebase Kate, a small, isolated United States
5 Army artillery base secured by a company of Civilian Irregular
6 Defense Group (CIDG) troops; and

7 WHEREAS, On October 28, 1969, Firebase Kate was attacked by
8 approximately 6,000 North Vietnamese troops in 2 infantry
9 regiments and a reinforced artillery regiment which soon
10 knocked out its 3 howitzers; on the morning of October 29,
11 while leading a reconnaissance patrol near the base, an enemy
12 ambush wounded the point man; and

13 WHEREAS, Disregarding his own safety, Captain Albracht ran
14 through withering fire from a machine gun concealed less than
15 50 meters away to find the unconscious trooper and carry him to
16 safety; and

17 WHEREAS, A few hours later, after returning to the
18 firebase, Captain Albracht took up an exposed position to guide
19 a Medevac helicopter to a safe landing; as the aircraft
20 approached, he observed the launch of an enemy B-40 rocket from
21 a nearby hill and realized that the pilot could not see this
22 missile; and

1 WHEREAS, With complete disregard for his own safety,
2 Captain Albracht stood his ground while frantically waving off
3 the helicopter; the pilot veered away to safety just before the
4 rocket impacted, wounding Captain Albracht with shrapnel; and

5 WHEREAS, Although in great pain from this wound, Captain
6 Albracht refused medical evacuation and continued to direct the
7 actions of Firebase Kate's defenders; and

8 WHEREAS, Later that same day, and on numerous occasions on
9 October 30, October 31, and November 1, with complete disregard
10 for his own safety, Captain Albracht took up exposed positions
11 from which he could fire tracer rounds at enemy machine guns
12 and crew-served weapons, thereby identifying targets for a
13 United States Air Force Forward Air Controller overhead;
14 ignoring the storm of small arms and recoilless rifle fire
15 directed at him each time, he remained in position until his
16 marked target was destroyed by United States Air Force attack
17 aircraft; and

18 WHEREAS, Captain Albracht's actions on these numerous
19 occasions allowed the safe landing of resupply and Medevac
20 helicopters without which the firebase would have been overrun;
21 and

1 WHEREAS, At dusk on October 30, after an emergency resupply
2 of water, dozens of CIDG troops rushed the water trailer; the
3 enemy immediately fired mortars at them; with complete
4 disregard for his own safety, Captain Albracht ran into this
5 barrage to drive, lead, and in some cases carry CIDG troops out
6 of the beaten zone; and

7 WHEREAS, On the morning of October 31, as a Medevac
8 helicopter approached the firebase to evacuate several wounded
9 men, the enemy fired mortars, small arms, and recoilless rifles
10 at the wounded men; and

11 WHEREAS, Fearing for their lives, and with complete
12 disregard for his own safety, Captain Albracht used his own
13 body to shield 2 wounded men until they were on the helicopter;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, By November 1, relentless attacks by the
16 numerically superior enemy had reduced Firebase Kate's
17 defenders to 125 U.S. and allied soldiers, many of them
18 wounded; resupply flights and air support by helicopter
19 gunships were halted because of overwhelming enemy ground fire;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Ordered to evacuate the firebase and then escape
22 and evade the thousands of enemy troops surrounding them,

1 Captain Albracht led his forces off their hilltop at nightfall;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, When the CIDG point man froze at the entrance to a
4 narrow path through thick jungle that was an obvious ambush
5 location, Captain Albracht took the point and led his men
6 forward; as they approached the tree line, an enemy machine gun
7 directed plunging fire at the column; men scattered into an
8 area littered with bomb and shell craters and splintered trees;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, To safeguard his men and keep them together, and
11 with complete disregard for his own safety, Captain Albracht
12 plunged into this area, grabbing men 2 and 3 at a time and
13 redirecting them to a safer rallying point; then, evading enemy
14 patrols while navigating entirely by dead reckoning, Captain
15 Albracht led his men through 5 kilometers of thick, trackless
16 jungle to a waiting rescue force; the combined force took a
17 circuitous route to the safety of Special Forces Team A-236's
18 camp at Bu Prang; and

19 WHEREAS, After 5 harrowing days, Captain Albracht's
20 selfless courage and leadership had saved approximately 125
21 U.S. and Allied soldiers; and

22 WHEREAS, Captain Albracht's actions resulted in the only

1 time during the 8 years that U.S. combat forces operated in
2 South Vietnam that a unit surrounded by a numerically superior
3 enemy force escaped intact; and

4 WHEREAS, Because of Captain Albracht, approximately 125
5 men lived to fight another day; Captain Albracht's unflinching
6 courage and unflagging leadership in the face of a well-trained
7 and highly motivated enemy were in keeping with the highest
8 traditions of the military service, and will forever reflect
9 great credit upon both himself and the United States Army; and

10 WHEREAS, Capt. William Albracht has been the recipient of 3
11 Silver Star Medals, 3 Purple Heart Medals, 5 Bronze Star Medals
12 (3 for valor), 2 Air Medals (one for valor), and the Army
13 Commendation Medal (for valor), but was not awarded the Medal
14 of Honor for his courageous acts at Firebase Kate; and

15 WHEREAS, The members of this body believe that the
16 gallantry displayed by Captain William Albracht on those
17 fateful days deserves to be further reviewed by the Department
18 of the Army and the Department of Defense in order to determine
19 if his actions are worthy of this nation's highest military
20 honor; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
22 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge Congress, the

1 Department of the Army, and the Department of Defense to again
2 review Captain Albracht's heroic actions at Firebase Kate and,
3 if warranted, upgrade the Silver Star Medal bestowed on him for
4 those actions to the Medal of Honor; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
6 presented to the President, the Speaker and Minority Leader of
7 the United States House of Representatives, and the Majority
8 and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate.